PROPOSED VALIDATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF "OSMERUS" (CLASS ACTINOPTERYGII) AS OF SUBGENERIC STATUS AS FROM LINNAEUS, 1758 (PROPOSED VALIDATION OF AN ERRONEOUS ENTRY ON THE "OFFICIAL LIST OF GENERIC NAMES IN ZOOLOGY" MADE BY THE RULING GIVEN IN "OPINION" 77)

By **FRANCIS HEMMING**, C.M.G., C.B.E.,
Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

(Commission's reference : Z.N.(S.) 564)

The present application is concerned with the correction of an erroneous entry on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* in relation to the reputed generic name *Osmerus* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Actinopterygii) made by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 77 (1922, *Smithson. misc. Coll.* 73(No. 1) : 71—73).

2. The error referred to above was discovered in the course of a preliminary survey of the entries so far made on the *Official List*, carried out by myself in the period 1943—1944, for the purpose of estimating the amount of work required before it would be possible to publish a volume containing particulars of all entries so far made on that *List*. The error in question is exactly similar to that which was detected in relation to the reputed generic name *Cercopithecus* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Mammalia), placed on the *Official List* by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 104. In each case the Commission accepted as a validly published generic name, a term which had been used by Linnaeus in 1758 in the nominative plural to distinguish a group of species assigned by him to some other genus. At the time when the foregoing *Opinions* were adopted, there existed no authoritative ruling as to the status of terms such as *Osmeri* and *Cercopitheci* as used by Linnaeus to denote groups of species below the genus-level, such terms being rejected by some workers but accepted by others. It was not until 1936 (*Smithson. misc. Coll.* 73(8) : 1—2) that an *Opinion* (*Opinion* 124) was published which put an end to this old controversy. By the Ruling so given which was based upon a decision taken by the Commission at its Session held at Padua in 1930 terms of the type discussed above were ruled to have no status of availability as from Linnaeus, 1758. The Commission recognised that in certain cases this ruling might lead to undesirable name-changing and added a rider to its ruling intimating its willingness to consider applications for the validation under the Plenary Powers of terms of this type.

3. When in *Opinion* 124 it settled the question of principle involved, the Commission overlooked the fact that in the two instances discussed above it

had placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* terms which under that Ruling possessed no status of availability. The case of the name *Cercopithecus* has been dealt with, having been validated under the Plenary Powers by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 238 (1954, *Ops. Decls. int. Comm. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 351—360). It is recommended that corresponding action should now be taken as regards the reputed generic name *Osmerus* Linnaeus, 1758.

4. The term *Osmeri* was published by Linnaeus in 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) **1** : 310) as a term to denote a group consisting of two species of the genus *Salmo*. The first of these species was *Salmo eperlanus* (: 310). This was the species which was cited as the type species of the genus " Osmerus " Linnaeus, 1758, when that " name " was placed on the *Official List* by *Opinion* 77. It appears to be still so regarded.

5. The " genus " *Osmerus* Linnaeus, 1758, is currently regarded as the type genus of a family OSMERIDAE. I have so far, however, been unable to ascertain where this name was first published. It is accordingly proposed that action in this matter should be deferred until it has been found possible to examine also the family-group-name problems involved in connection with the other generic names for fishes placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* by the Ruling given in *Opinion* 77.

6. In order to remove the obstacle to the publication of the *Official List* represented by the erroneous entry made thereon by the Ruling given in this case in *Opinion* 77, the International Commission is now asked :—

(1) to use its Plenary Powers to validate the reputed generic name *Osmerus* as from Linnaeus, 1758, and to designate *Salmo eperlanus* Linnaeus, 1758, to be the type species of the genus so named ;

(2) to confirm in its position as Name No. 265 on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* the generic name *Osmerus* Linnaeus, 1758, as validated under the Plenary Powers under (1) above and with the type species there designated ;

(3) to place on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* the specific name *eperlanus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Salmo eperlanus* (specific name of type species of *Osmerus* Linnaeus, 1758).